

MARYLAND BIRDLIFE

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Number 1

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by Charles J. Cignatta

DEPARTMENT HEADINGS: Irving E. Hampe

MARYLAND BIRDLIFE

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March - April, 1952

Number 1

SUMMARY OF MARYLAND CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS (1950-51)

Seth H. Low

During the specified period, December 23, 1950 through January 1, 1951, fourteen Christmas Bird Counts were made within the State of Maryland. A fifteenth count at the Patuxent Research Refuge was taken later in January. With the exception of the latter, all the counts conformed to the regular specifications and the details of each, except for Patuxent and Annapolis, will be found in the April 1951 issue of Audubon Field Notes.

A brief resume of the previous summaries follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Counts</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Individuals</u>	<u>Maryland Birdlife</u>
1947-48	13	127	328,500	Vol. 4, No. 1, Jan.-Feb., 1948
1948-49	12	139	1,116,594	Vol. 6, No. 2, Mar.-Apr., 1950
1949-50	16	147	872,594	Vol. 6, No. 2, Mar.-Apr., 1950
1950-51	15	146	657,294	this issue

Five new species were added to the four-year total, bringing it to 167 species; these were the European Cormorant and Dowitcher at Ocean City; the European Teal south of Berlin; the Ring-necked Pheasant at Catoctin and Loch Raven; and the Northern Shrike in Montgomery County. The American Magpie is placed on the hypothetical list on the probability it was an escape. Other highlights were as follows:

The numbers of grebes, swans, brant, Gadwalls, Baldpate, Pintail, all diving ducks and Coot were all way down; probably due to the extensive freezing over of marshes, rivers, and bays. Canada Geese were present in about the usual numbers; and the Ocean City count coincided with a late flight of Snow Geese.

A small increase was noted in Red-shouldered Hawks and Bald Eagles. Two Ospreys were seen at Chase. A total of 25 Virginia Rails were found on three counts. The Annapolis party accounted for 12 of the 14 Woodcock. The count of Mourning Doves (821) was the highest yet. All the woodpecker counts were up; due perhaps to more coverage. The highlight of the year was 32 Eastern Phoebes on 7 of the 15 counts.

Blue Jays, Carolina Wrens, Hermit Thrushes, Myrtle Warblers, Meadowlarks, and Cardinals were more abundant but American Pipits were scarce. John Buckalew's 11 Evening Grosbeaks were a new record for the Eastern Shore. Vesper Sparrows and Towhees were more numerous. All 70 Chipping Sparrows and 849 of the 1,382 Field Sparrows were near Ocean City.

The coverage of the State was not quite so good as last year. Two important counts were not made: namely, Garrett County and Kent Island. The Crisfield area was dropped as previously suggested. Two new areas, Denton and Gibson Island, were added. Comments on each count follow:

McCool (Allegany County), the highest and most western of the regular areas, was again covered by a party of three: Byron Kiser, Anna and L. M. Llewellyn. The species count (23) was low but the individual count (425) higher than last year, when 9 more species were found.

Cumberland (Allegany Co.) had more local participation: Mrs. T. M. Andrews, J. J. F. Deetz, Margaret Hafer, Jon De Hart, Neil Smith, Kent Smith, Bill Scott, Richard Johnson, Gilbert M. Miller, Helen B. Miller, Patricia Taschenberger, Harry Miller, Leonard Llewellyn. The coverage, however, was only about one-third that of last year with corresponding drops in species (34) and individuals (1,356).

Catoctin Mountains (Frederick and Washington Cos.) due to iced roads, could not be completely covered. The species (40) and individual counts (2,562) were down. Orville Crowder, Duvall Jones, Tirzah M. Sandy, John Stauffer, Martha Stauffer, Dr. R. S. Stauffer.

Loch Raven (Baltimore Co.) was made by only one, Haven Kolb, of the two usual observers. Species (29) and individual counts (393) were up slightly.

Triadelphia Reservoir (Montgomery Co.) had slightly better coverage, but still lacks sufficient observers. The counts of species (60) and individuals (8,084) were the highest yet obtained. John H. Fales, Ann, Margaret, Seth and Tommy Low, Chandler S. Robbins, and John L. Thomen.

Patuxent Research Refuge (Prince Georges County) was covered in the usual manner by about the same number of parties. Results were about the same: species, 52; individuals, 3,601. C. Cottam, J. V. Derby, L. M. Llewellyn, S. H. Low, A. C. Martin, R. T. Mitchell, A. L. Nelson, R. E. Stewart, O. Warbach, C. G. Webster.

Accokeek (Prince Georges Co.) in area covered and time afield falls far short of most of the other counts but is well justified in that it has been conducted in a comparable manner for a number of years. Species, 57; individuals, 2,179. A. A. Baker, Edwin T. McKnight, Thos. B. Nolan, W. W. Rubey.

Wicomico (Charles and St. Marys Cos.) an important area on the lower Potomac, again suffered from inadequate coverage due to the lack of sufficient observers. The species count (80) is the best yet for the

area but the number of individuals (9,532) was way down from two years ago. R. L. Bezek, R. F. Deed, M. Gilbert, C. H. Mayhood, J. W. Taylor, C. Ward.

Anne Arundel Co. (Annapolis) was not censused in 1949. The results for 1950 do not compare with those made from southern Anne Arundel Co. in 1948. Species, 24; individuals, 141. A. D. Blair, C. H. Blair, and R. H. Blair.

Susquehanna Flats (Cecil Co.) for the first time, covered by three parties but more observers are still needed. The species count (67) equalled the previous high but is below the potential. The individual count was way down (568,803) due to the water areas being 90% or more frozen over. E. G. Davis, W. T. Davis, Duvall Jones, Seth H. Low, C. S. Robbins, Jack Weaver, Edwin Willis, and J. E. Willoughby.

Chase (Baltimore County) was expanded, for the first time, into a full-size census. As usual it had large participation (24) but the observers were poorly distributed between parties. However, the count of species (87) was the second highest for the State for the year and individuals were 11,595. T. M. Brannan, Charles Buchanan, Richard Cole, Orville Crowder, George Drumm, Nelson Edwards, Mrs. B. M. Gregory, Lt. Thos. A. Imhof, Duvall Jones, Haven Kolb, Seth H. Low, John Mason, Wm. McHoul, Marcia Newell, Dorothy Rice, C. S. Robbins, Evans Roberts, T. M. Sandy, Andrew Simon, Richard Simon, Gordon Vars, Jack Weaver, Edwin Willis, A. Winslow.

Gibson Island (Anne Arundel Co.) a new count, was made by the Anne Arundel club. Considering the weather and that it was the initial effort of the group, the results were very promising: species, 49; individuals, 2,495. Charles Buchanan, W. L. Henderson, Mrs. Mortimer North, Mrs. Gail Tappan, Mrs. H. B. Temple, A. L. Varrieur.

Denton (Caroline Co.) likewise was a new census by a new group in a unique area, in that it is in the heart of the Delmarva peninsula but does not contain any coastal areas or sizable bodies of water. The species count of 47 was very good but the individual count of 1,634 was low. Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Fletcher, Marvin Hewitt, A. May Thompson.

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (Dorchester Co.) due to poor weather and insufficient observers, had the lowest species count (86) in recent years but the number of individuals (20,017) held up fairly well. Ernest G. Baldwin, Seth H. Low, Charles Mayhood, Reginald Orem, Chandler S. Robbins, John W. Taylor, Jr., Joanna Tousey, Richard Tousey, Ruth L. Tousey.

Ocean City (Worcester Co.) had a thin coverage with 10 individuals in 6 parties; less than in 1949, but comparable with 1948. The 122 species lacked one of the 1948 high while 24,577 individuals was average. No boat trip was made off-shore or across to Assateague, although the latter was covered by car from the lower end. Jay H. Arnold, Ernest G. Baldwin, John W. Buskalew, Jr., Seth H. Low, Charles Mayhood, E. O. Mellinger, Fred M. Packard, Chandler S. Robbins, John W. Taylor.

Complete figures for all 14 counts appear on the following pages.

Species	Mc Cool	All Co.	Cat Mt.	Loch Ravn	Tria Res	Patu xent	Acco keek	Wico mico	Anne Arun	Susq Flats	Ch ase	Gib Is.	Den ton	Black water	Ocean City	Total
Common Loon	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	29	30
Red-throated Loon	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	35	--	--	--	--	--	--	10	45
Holboell's Grebe	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	1
Horned Grebe	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	14	--	--	2	--	--	9	42	68
Pied-billed Grebe	--	--	--	--	4	--	--	2	--	2	--	--	--	--	8	16
Gannet	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2	2
European Cormorant	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	1
Double-cr. Cormorant	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	3	3
Great Blue Heron	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	5	1	1	4	3	2	11	19	47
American Bittern	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	2	3
Whistling Swan	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	3	--	384	547	380	--	--	--	1,314
Canada Goose	--	--	--	--	3	8	--	--	--	9300	53	102	--	2115	2378	13,959
Brant	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	4800	4,801
Snow Goose	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	4	--	--	--	--	1986	1,990
Blue Goose	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	3	--	3
Mallard	--	33	4	--	150	4	11	17	--	6	11	--	--	125	21	382
Black Duck	--	--	6	31	300	17	90	81	--	2500	371	--	--	1675	395	5,466
Gadwall	--	--	--	--	5	--	--	39	--	--	12	--	--	4	--	60
Baldpate	--	--	--	--	18	--	--	897	--	2	1109	25	--	1	4	2,056
Pintail	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	34	--	--	1	--	--	223	101	360
European Teal	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	1
Green-winged Teal	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	7	--	--	2	3	12
Blue-winged Teal	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	1	2
Shoveller	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2	4	6
Wood Duck	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2	--	3	6
Redhead	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	6	--	1	403	31	--	4	1	446
Ring-necked Duck	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	6	--	7	4	--	--	--	--	17
Canvas-back	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	1414	--	875	701	490	--	1990	5	5,476
Scaup Duck (sp.)	--	--	--	--	--	--	1.	1	--	16	96	G. 73	--	G. 91	--	309
American Golden-eye	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	35	4	46	22	--	270	51	429
Buffle-head	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	17	4	--	15	11	--	12	221	280
Old-squaw	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	2	--	12	87	102
White-winged Scoter	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	26	26
Surf Scoter	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	26	26
American Scoter	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2	2
Ruddy Duck	--	--	--	--	5	--	4	768	--	--	29	758	--	2	1	1,567

Species	Mc Cool	All Co.	Cat Mt.	Loch Ravn	Tria Res	Patu xent	Acco keek	Wico mlco	Anne Arun	Susq Flats	Ch ase	Gib Is.	Den ton	Black water	Ocean City	Total
Hooded Merganser	--	--	--	--	--	2	--	--	--	--	37	1	--	21	4	65
American Merganser	--	--	9	8	22	--	20	2	--	170	82	--	--	79	--	392
Red-breasted Merganser	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	8	--	--	2	--	--	--	139	149
Turkey Vulture	--	--	21	2	167	30	10	136	2	103	74	1	96	87	386	1,115
Black Vulture	--	--	--	--	13	1	5	12	--	12	--	--	--	--	5	48
Sharp-shinned Hawk	--	--	1	--	2	--	1	2	--	1	1	--	1	3	5	17
Cooper's Hawk	--	--	--	1	1	1	--	--	--	--	1	--	1	1	3	9
Red-tailed Hawk	--	2	1	--	6	6	2	6	--	11	8	--	1	8	8	59
Red-shouldered Hawk	--	--	1	--	6	5	--	4	--	8	5	--	2	6	10	47
Rough-legged Hawk	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	1	--	--	3	1	6
Bald Eagle	--	--	--	--	1	1	5	5	--	10	31	--	--	27	1	81
Marsh Hawk	--	--	2	1	8	2	2	11	--	6	18	--	7	48	19	124
Osprey	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2	--	--	--	--	2
Peregrine Falcon	--	1	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	3
Sparrow Hawk	1	--	11	--	11	2	1	11	--	16	10	--	22	7	36	128
Ruffed Grouse	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1
Bob-white	10	12	1	5	--	29	22	2	--	--	6	16	11	10	35	159
Ring-necked Pheasant	--	--	3	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	4
King Rail	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	2	3
Virginia Rail	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	5	--	--	7	--	--	13	--	25
Sora	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	3	--	4
American Coot	--	--	--	18	--	--	--	99	--	16	45	--	--	1	1	179
Killdeer	--	4	6	--	9	--	10	9	--	8	18	2	4	20	88	178
Black-bellied Plover	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	39	39
American Woodcock	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	12	--	--	--	--	2	--	14
Wilson's Snipe	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	2	3
Greater Yellow-legs	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	1	--	2
Purple Sandpiper	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2	2
Least Sandpiper	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2	2
Red-backed Sandpiper	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	272	272
Dowitcher	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	1
Semipalmated Sandpiper	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	1
Sanderling	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	145	145
Gr. Black-backed Gull	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	6	5	11
Herring Gull	--	--	--	--	--	--	70	65	9	292	178	5	27	95	1385	2,126
Ring-billed Gull	--	--	--	--	--	--	35	48	4	247	70	5	--	119	257	785
Bonaparte's Gull	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2	--	--	--	--	--	17	19

Jan. - Feb., 1952

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Species	Mc Cool	All Co.	Cat Mt.	Loch Ravn	Tria Res	Patu xant	Acco keek	Wico mico	Anne Arun	Susq Flats	Ch ase	Gib Is.	Den ton	Black water	Ocean City	Total
Mourning Dove	--	--	3	--	96	161	40	40	--	1	1	5	114	9	351	821
Barn Owl	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	1	2
Screech Owl	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	3	--	--	1	4
Great Horned Owl	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	11	2	14
Barred Owl	--	--	--	--	1	1	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	4	7
Belted Kingfisher	--	--	--	2	1	--	--	5	1	2	8	7	3	5	4	38
Flicker	--	2	1	2	6	46	15	38	1	10	35	4	4	16	42	222
Pileated Woodpecker	--	--	--	--	--	6	2	2	--	--	--	--	--	2	5	17
Red-bellied Woodpecker	--	--	--	--	6	36	16	45	2	8	29	4	4	7	33	190
Red-headed Woodpecker	--	--	--	--	--	--	25	2	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	28
Yellow-bel. Sapsucker	--	--	3	--	--	4	4	--	1	--	3	--	1	--	3	19
Hairy Woodpecker	1	2	--	--	2	27	5	6	--	7	19	1	--	5	26	101
Downy Woodpecker	9	48	13	6	22	61	20	28	1	15	33	5	12	14	41	328
Eastern Phoebe	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	2	--	--	1	1	8	2	17	32
Horned Lark	2	30	2	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	13	--	61	11	65	185
Blue Jay	--	5	17	3	87	237	35	46	1	37	131	7	21	16	2	645
American Magpie	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1
Crow	8	42	1640	89	3652	189	15	59	9	127	628	18	52	1750	261	8,539
Fish Crow	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	21	5	3	--	--	--	29
Black-capped Chickadee	9	15	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	24
Carolina Chickadee	--	--	21	7	55	167	25	27	1	73	72	17	66	44	249	824
Tufted Titmouse	7	46	7	--	21	152	30	34	2	23	47	10	16	12	65	472
White-br. Nuthatch	3	9	2	--	9	5	1	--	--	3	10	--	--	--	5	47
Red-breasted Nuthatch	--	--	--	2	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	3
Brown-headed Nuthatch	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	33	--	33
Brown Creeper	--	5	3	--	13	20	7	4	--	12	8	--	3	14	17	106
House Wren	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	4	4
Winter Wren	--	--	2	--	6	7	1	1	--	7	12	2	--	5	11	54
Carolina Wren	12	14	7	3	19	19	35	55	--	29	58	16	18	21	47	353
Long-billed Marsh Wren	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	10	--	--	1	--	--	24	--	35
Short-bill. Marsh Wren	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	14	1	15
Mockingbird	3	1	5	1	42	14	12	26	2	12	14	18	14	5	16	185
Catbird	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	5	6
Brown Thrasher	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2	6	8
Robin	--	2	2	2	--	37	--	6	--	--	24	--	1	54	635	763
Hermit Thrush	--	1	--	1	--	3	3	6	--	2	2	5	8	32	55	118
Eastern Bluebird	--	7	8	51	37	39	30	86	3	36	56	10	36	17	24	440

Species	Mc Cool	All Co.	Cat Mt.	Loch Ravn	Tria Res	Patu xent	Acco keek	Wico Mico	Anne Arun	Susq Flats	Ch ase	Gib Is.	Den ton	Black water	Ocean City	Total
Golden-crowned Kinglet	--	2	--	--	30	46	20	5	--	39	5	--	7	44	39	237
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	--	--	--	--	1	7	--	4	--	2	2	5	2	--	2	25
American Pipit	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	25	--	12	--	--	--	--	101	138
Cedar Waxwing	--	2	--	--	--	--	5	1	--	39	27	--	--	--	3	77
Northern Shrike	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1
Migrant Shrike	--	--	--	--	2	--	--	3	--	--	--	--	2	2	7	16
Starling	51	106	307	3	2155	141	400	220	45	2400	2838	38	338	224	945	10,211
Myrtle Warbler	4	1	--	9	12	178	12	94	--	63	126	16	10	2040	1075	3,640
Palm Warbler	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	1
Yellow-throat	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	1
English Sparrow	42	113	170	--	188	--	18	78	9	400	394	30	118	156	232	1,948
Eastern Meadowlark	--	--	--	--	130	57	50	270	--	27	67	--	153	295	1720	2,769
Red-wing	--	--	--	--	--	2	170	3075	--	500000	1175	--	--	6580	402	511,404
Rusty Blackbird	--	--	--	--	--	21	45	41	--	6	3	--	--	8	--	125
Boat-tailed Grackle	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	30	30
Purple Grackle	1	--	--	--	--	--	30	235	--	50000	--	--	1	427	1	50,695
Cowbird	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	51	--	300	67	--	30	214	656	1,321
Cardinal	52	157	35	14	44	84	50	97	6	88	112	43	39	82	288	1,191
Evening Grosbeak	--	1	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	11	13
Purple Finch	--	--	--	--	4	3	3	1	--	10	10	2	--	--	--	33
Pine Siskin	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	1
Goldfinch	7	12	1	19	25	48	100	67	--	151	171	30	35	63	171	900
Red-eyed Towhee	--	--	--	--	--	28	--	32	--	1	27	--	12	27	109	236
Savannah Sparrow	--	--	--	--	1	--	6	--	--	--	7	--	--	26	52	92
Sharp-tailed Sparrow	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	1
Vesper Sparrow	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	29	30
Slate-colored Junco	123	352	51	49	281	685	250	155	14	353	638	102	150	106	575	3,884
Tree Sparrow	20	308	136	30	201	260	5	2	--	50	102	1	4	6	18	1,143
Chipping Sparrow	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	70	70
Field Sparrow	--	--	1	--	31	93	10	75	4	177	36	5	35	66	849	1,382
White-crowned Sparrow	21	2	--	--	6	--	--	--	--	12	--	--	--	--	--	41
White-throated Sparrow	18	4	32	42	77	327	200	366	8	160	335	95	52	83	1575	3,374
Fox Sparrow	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	27	27
Swamp Sparrow	--	--	--	2	1	113	1	10	--	10	47	5	--	220	55	464
Song Sparrow	20	14	24	6	65	167	175	74	1	76	182	59	28	210	426	1,527
Totals	23 425	34 1356	40 2562	29 393	60 8084	52 3601	57 2179	80 9332	25 142	67 568803	87 11595	49 2495	47 1634	86 20117	122 24577	657,294

BALTIMORE ORIOLES IN MARYLAND IN WINTER

Hervey Brackbill

The first Baltimore Orioles (*Icterus galbula*) ever seen in Maryland in winter, as far as published records show, appeared in January 1951 - a male at Towson, Baltimore County, on January 4, and a female in the Walbrook section of Baltimore City on January 10; the female stayed on through February 21.

The first bird was reported by Jack Kaufmann, of 531 Park Avenue, Towson. From indoors, Jack was watching a window feeding shelf at his home on January 4 when the oriole alit in a maple just a few yards away, and for about half a minute moved about the branches, eyeing the feeder as if tempted by suet there; then it flew away. There are Baltimore Orioles about his home every summer, Jack says, and so he is quite familiar with them; he is positive of his identification of this male.

On January 10 I gave an account of the Towson bird in the Baltimore Evening Sun. As a result I was informed of a female oriole which on that very morning began visiting a second-floor window feeding shelf at the home of C. Walter Lane, 2203 Elsinor Avenue, in Walbrook. Except possibly on a scattering of days that fell chiefly during periods of especially warm weather, this bird appeared there through February 21 - usually several times a day. As a guest of the Lanes, I confirmed the identification on January 14, seeing the bird three times between 10:30 a.m. and noon.

Species Changing Status; Weather

Reporting recently (Auk 68: 108-110, 1951) some new winter occurrences of the Baltimore Oriole in Georgia, and discussing such occurrences in that state and South Carolina, Stoddard expresses the belief that "the wintering habit is now established in South Carolina" and is in the process of becoming established on the whole coastal plain of the deep Southeast. In connection with these increasingly frequent winter occurrences, attention may be called to an oriole seen at Mount Joy, Lancaster County, Pa., on February 4, 1951 (Bull. Lancaster Co. Bird Club, 22: 10, 1951).

Stoddard finds that in the Southeast "many of the orioles are first noted following the passing of 'cold fronts', possibly from points to the northwestward." This winter's Maryland occurrences do not fit into such a pattern. January 4, the day the Towson bird was seen, was the peak day of a warm spell, with a maximum temperature of 65° and a mean 17° above normal; there was, however, a northwest wind that averaged 12 miles an hour. January 10, the day of the Walbrook bird's arrival, was, indeed, the first day of a two-day cold snap, but the winds during that time had been chiefly from southwesterly directions.

Tameness; Food

On the first visit I saw the Walbrook bird make to the Lane feeder it stayed only a minute or two; motion by me too close to the window probably frightened it away. On the other two visits, it fed for five or six minutes, and with such absorption that I was able to move cautiously up within one or two feet of it. This tameness was typical of it throughout the six weeks it was present, the Lanes said, and many of its visits to the feeder were very much longer than those I saw. Records kept by Miss Mary E. Lane show that most of its visits were made in the morning, frequently as early as 7:30 o'clock. On its final day it "spent the day", being present until after 5 p.m.

Suet and mixed seed are the foods normally used by the Lanes on their feeder. It was the suet that originally attracted the oriole, and except that Mrs. Lane believes that a sunflower seed was once opened, suet was the only food it was seen to eat for some days. When, however, halved grapes were put out especially for it, these at once became the preferred food; the oriole not only ate them as clean as it could by pecking at them, Mrs. Lane relates, but then took up the skins in its bill and worked them about until it had got out every last bit of flesh. Corn muffin, occasionally placed on the feeder, was also eaten.

In eating suet, I noticed on my visit, the oriole generally picked at the lump with seemingly closed bill. Occasionally, though, it put its bill to the suet in a closed position, then spread the mandibles so that the tips scratched across the surface of the lump; Beecher not long ago (Wilson Bull., 62: 53, 1950) described this as the method used by the genus Icterus to obtain the juice of fruits and the nectar of flowers. By either method of eating, the bird scarcely scarred the raw suet, and it obtained this food only in minute portions.

Relations with Other Birds

Mrs. Lane states that the oriole frequently fought vigorously against English Sparrows (Passer domesticus) when these crowded it while swarming over the small feeder for seed. Miss Mary E. Lane also saw occasional slight tiffs with Cardinals (Richmondia cardinalis). Toward the end of its stay, in particular, Mrs. Lane relates, the oriole was repeatedly attacked viciously by a Mockingbird (Mimus polyglottos) that also liked the grapes and became domineering at the feeder. Once, she says, the Mockingbird pounced upon the oriole while it was eating on the tray, and twice it "knocked the oriole out of a nearby tree onto the ground."

[It is interesting that the first Maryland winter records for the Baltimore Oriole should be obtained in a year when an unusual number of stragglers were recorded from other northern states. In addition to the occurrences mentioned by Mr. Brackbill, single birds were reported to the Fish and Wildlife Service in late December, January or February from Newburyport, Mass., New London, Conn., Jamestown, Ballston Lake and Baldwin, N. Y.; Ridgewood, N. J., Richboro, Pa., Lexington, Va., and Youngstown, Ohio. -- Ed.]



THE SEASON - March and April 1951 (*)

Chandler S. Robbins

The weather summary supplied by Edwin Willis at Middle River is typical for the entire State: "Normal, with a steady rise from near freezing temperatures in early March to warm (75°) temperatures in late April. There were no storms and few temperature waves to break the monotony of the weather." Winter residents departed a few days early, except for the few stragglers which add zest to the spring bird trips by remaining up to three weeks after the others of their species have departed. Arrivals averaged about on time for the period as a whole.

Grebes, Herons. Since the hard freezes of the past winter drove virtually all the grebes out of the head of the Chesapeake, this is an opportune time to place on record some spring arrival dates of our common grebes. The first 5 Pied-billed Grebes were seen on the Gunpowder River on March 11 by Thomas A. Imhof; two days later the same number were noted at Preston in Caroline County by Marvin Hewitt. At Middle River, on the other hand, Edwin Willis did not observe his first one until March 26, three days after his first Horned Grebe appeared. Frank C. Cross and Seth H. Low reported the first inland Horned Grebes at Seneca and Triadelphia Reservoir on April 8. Judge and Mrs. William L. Henderson noticed the first Horned Grebe in breeding plumage on March 24 in Eastern Bay; by April 11 a flock of 8 had entirely molted. Among early heron arrivals were 3 American Egrets at Denton on April 15 (Hewitt), 2 Green Herons in the Forest Glen section of Silver Spring on April 17 (Cross), a Green Heron in Frederick County on the 21st (M.O.S. trip), and an American Bittern at Triadelphia Reservoir on April 8 (Low).

Waterfowl. The Whistling Swan population in the Gunpowder River rose from a low of 402 birds at the height of the freeze to 2,500 on March 11. Imhof reported a dramatic exodus on the evening of March 12, when 16 flocks passed over Edgewood between 8:00 and 10:10 p.m.

(*) - "The Season" for May through December 1951 will be summarized in the March-April 1952 issue; January through April 1952 will be reported in the May-June issue. Previous practice will then be resumed: May through August will be covered in the September-October issue, September and October in the November-December issue, and so on.

The Choptank River swans had gone by March 15, and a careful check of the Gunpowder and Bush Rivers on March 18 revealed only 945 remaining. The principal northward flight of Canada Geese took place on April 1. The previous summary gave high counts for species which reached a peak on the Gunpowder River during January or February. High counts for additional species in that area were obtained by Imhof during March as follows: 600 Canada Geese on March 11, 15 Gadwall and 6,100 Baldpate on March 18, 50 Green-winged Teal on March 7, 2,950 Redheads on March 18 and 1,950 Coot on March 18. Ruddy Ducks gradually built up to a peak of about 300 on March 30 at Chalk Point in Anne Arundel County, then fell off; the last 50 were noted on April 23 (E. John and Adele Besson).

Hawks. Douglas Hackman reported minor flights over White Marsh on March 23 (13 birds in 5 hours) and March 31 (24 birds in 5 hours). Red-shouldered and Sparrow Hawks predominated but 6 other species, including one Duck Hawk, were included.

Shorebirds, Gulls, and Terns. The earliest arrival dates reported for shorebirds this year were 7 Piping Plover at Assateague Island on April 14 (J. H. Buckalew), 1 Wilson's Snipe at Middle River on March 29 (Willis), a very early Spotted Sandpiper at Gibson Island on April 9 (Mrs. Henderson), a Solitary Sandpiper on Gunpowder Neck, April 13, 1 Greater Yellow-legs at Triadelphia Reservoir and 5 at Middle River on April 8, 22 early Lesser Yellow-legs at Middle River on April 14, a Pectoral Sandpiper at the same place on April 15 and 8 Least Sandpipers on the 28th (Willis). Willis had a total of 53 Wilson's Snipe during April, with a maximum count of 11 on the third. Rod Smith and Tom Partridge recorded 100 snipe at Frederick on March 17. Great Black-backed Gulls reached a peak of 6 in the lower Gunpowder on March 3 (Imhof). The first transient Bonaparte's Gulls appeared on March 24 at Claiborne (1), Royal Oak (5), Kent Narrows (1), and Middle River (7) (Hendersons, Willis). Caspian Tern arrivals were April 14 at Middle River (peak of 15 on April 29), April 22 at Ocean City (David Cutler), and April 23 at Gibson Island (Hendersons).

Whip-poor-wills, Swifts, Sapsuckers. A Whip-poor-will on April 15 was an early record for Gibson Island; in most places, this species was a little late: April 17 at Patuxent Refuge (Lois Horn) and April 19 at Middle River (Willis) are the only other dates worth recording. Chimney Swifts arrived on time on the average; the first recorded were at Laurel, April 10, Frederick, April 13, and Gibson Island (where remarkably abundant this year), April 14. Douglas Hackman found a late Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at White Marsh on April 30.

Perching Birds. The accompanying table shows comparative arrival dates at 8 localities for selected March and April migrants. The Lake Roland records were furnished by Mrs. Robert Kaestner; Middle River by Edwin Willis; Silver Spring by Frank Cross, John Fales and James Derby; Patuxent Refuge by Robbins, Stewart, Low, Llewellyn, Martin, Mrs. Horn, and Mr. and Mrs. Clark Webster; Southern Maryland (Charles and St. Marys Counties) by Catherine Crone, Dr. Harri-

Table 1. First arrival dates, 1951

Species	Lake Rold.	Mid. River	Silv. Sprg.	Patu- xent	Sn. Md.	Gibson Is.	Caro- line	Poco- moke
Eastern Kingbird	5/1	4/28		4/25		<u>4/22</u>	4/26	4/29
Crested Flycatcher	5/3	4/30	5/3	4/28		<u>4/1</u>	4/29	
Tree Swallow	0	4/6		3/25	4/1	4/23	3/23	<u>2/25</u>
Barn Swallow		4/8		<u>4/2</u>		<u>4/2</u>	4/8	
Purple Martin	0	3/29	4/11	3/26		4/10	<u>3/19</u>	
House Wren	4/24	4/21	4/26	4/12	4/27	4/3	4/23	4/21
Catbird	5/1	4/26	4/29	4/29	4/27	<u>3/26</u>	4/26	
Brown Thrasher	4/24	4/7	4/7	3/31	4/1	<u>3/5</u>	4/8	
Wood Thrush	4/30	4/23	4/26	4/29	4/27	4/26	4/21	<u>4/21</u>
Blue-gr. Gnatcat.	0	4/27	4/14	4/10	4/1	4/17	4/6	
White-eyed Vireo	5/8	5/1		4/24	<u>4/22</u>		4/25	<u>4/21</u>
Yell.-thr. Vireo	4/26	5/10	4/27	4/22	4/27	4/26	4/27	<u>4/21</u>
Blue-headed Vireo	4/26	<u>4/20</u>	0	4/26	0	4/22	0	0
Red-eyed Vireo	4/30	<u>5/2</u>	<u>4/26</u>	<u>4/26</u>	4/27		4/28	
Bl. & Wh. Warbler	5/1	4/19	4/21	4/24	4/22	4/17	4/26	<u>4/15</u>
Prothon. Warbler	5/2	5/26		5/9	4/27		4/25	<u>4/8</u>
Parula Warbler	5/2	5/2	4/27	4/22	4/22	4/21	4/25	<u>4/15</u>
Yellow Warbler	4/26	4/26	5/5	4/29		<u>4/21</u>	4/26	
Blk.-Thr. Green W.	4/30	0	4/29	4/29	4/27		0	
Pine Warbler	0	0	3/25	3/30	4/1	<u>3/24</u>	4/9	
Prairie Warbler	4/30	4/30	5/5	4/25	<u>4/22</u>	<u>4/26</u>	4/28	
Yellow Palm Wblr.	<u>4/8</u>	<u>4/8</u>		4/13		4/12	0	
Oven-bird	4/30	4/26	4/26	4/24	4/27	4/29	4/21	4/21
La. Water-thrush	4/17	0	4/6	4/8	<u>4/1</u>		4/6	
Yellow-throat	5/1	4/25	4/24	4/30	4/27	4/25	4/23	<u>4/21</u>
Hooded Warbler	4/30	5/8	4/26	4/28	4/27		<u>4/24</u>	
Amer. Redstart	4/26	4/30	4/26	4/26	4/27		5/3	<u>4/21</u>
Grasshopper Spar.	4/15	4/13		4/26	4/27		4/25	<u>4/8</u>
Vesper Sparrow	3/17	4/7		3/30		4/12	<u>3/1</u>	
Chipping Sparrow	4/24	4/2	4/12	<u>3/30</u>		4/7	<u>3/31</u>	

son F. Lewis and Robbins; Gibson Island by Mrs. Vera Henderson; Caroline County by Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Fletcher, Marvin Hewitt, A. May Thompson and Bob Maloney; and Pocomoke River (including Ocean City) by John H. Buckalew, E. O. Mellinger, and David A. Cutler. Under-scored dates are the earliest for Maryland this year. A zero indicates that the species was not recorded at all during this period, while a blank signifies that no significant arrival date was obtained.

The areas are arranged from northwest to southeast, so that the majority of species arrive progressively later as one reads from right to left. This progression occupies a period of over a month for some of the earliest migrants such as the Tree Swallow, and for birds such as the Prothonotary Warbler which are approaching the northern limit of their breeding range. On the other hand, the difference amounts to

little more than a week for several of the late April migrants. If the western counties were represented, a greater difference would result. Still more striking would be the lag between arrival dates for species such as the Blue-headed Vireo, which reach us via the Mississippi Valley and Appalachians rather than along the Coastal Plain; note that this vireo was not recorded at all in southern Maryland or on the Eastern Shore.

Ravens, Creepers, Wrens, Shrikes. Especially interesting notes on these groups were: a Raven over Sideling Hill on April 6 (Charles O. Handley, Jr.); late Brown Creepers at Snow Hill on April 21 (Buckalew and Mellinger) and at Garland Lake, Caroline County, on April 9 (Duncan McIntosh); a late and southern record for the Northern Shrike at Pocomoke City on March 5 and 10 (Buckalew), and another individual near Conococheague Creek, Washington County, March 7 (Mrs. R. S. Stauffer); and a good flight of Migrant Shrikes with a peak count of 22 in one day on the lower Eastern Shore (Buckalew).

Orioles. In view of the winter records for the Baltimore Oriole this year, it seems likely that a female bird which frequented the feeding shelf of Mrs. Wilson Shaffer in Baltimore from April 12 on was actually a winter survivor rather than an exceptionally early spring migrant; the first *bona fide* migrant was seen at Denton on April 28 (A. May Thompson). Early records of the Orchard Oriole were obtained on April 26 at Garland Lake (Roberta Fletcher) and Gibson Island (earliest local record, Mrs. Henderson).

WINTERING SORA RAIL AT CEDAR POINT, CHARLES COUNTY

Up until the present time, there have been only two winter records of the Sora Rail (Porzana carolina) in Maryland west of Chesapeake Bay. Both of these records, verified by collected specimens, were made by James Holton in Canton, Baltimore County; the first on December 26, 1890, and the second on January 22, 1895 (Kirkwood, A List of the Birds of Maryland, Trans.Md.Acad.Sci. 2: 241-382, 1895).

On December 31, 1950, however, a Sora Rail was heard at Cedar Point, a part of the area covered in the Wicomico Christmas Count. Being thoroughly familiar with the Sora's calls, and being aware of the fact that the bird is rare in winter, I identified the Sora after hearing it chip two times and then confirmed my identification upon hearing the whinny characteristic only of this bird.

The fifty-five year lapse between the latest record and the present one is no criterion, in my opinion, of the winter occurrence of the Sora west of Chesapeake Bay. The Christmas Count at Blackwater Refuge and Elliott Island in 1949, showing the presence of three Soras, and the 1950 Christmas Count of that same area, also showing three Sora Rails, are a good indication of the Sora's regular winter occurrence on the lower Eastern Shore of Maryland. I believe that increased coverage of the suitable habitat found west of Chesapeake Bay will result in better knowledge of the distribution of the Sora Rail in winter.

Charles H. Mayhood

FIRST KITTIWAKE SPECIMEN FOR MARYLAND

During the winter of 1951 while conducting a survey to determine the number of dead birds that wash up onto the coastal beaches of New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland, I came upon a fresh carcass which adds a new species to the list of Maryland birds. My party hiked the coastline from Rehobeth, Delaware to Ocean City, Maryland on March 4, 1951, operating from two cars, and letting observers off at one-mile intervals. Several miles north of Ocean City, I picked up an adult female Atlantic Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla tridactyla*), subspecifically identified by Mr. James Bond of the Academy of Natural Science of Philadelphia. The bird was lying near the high tide line in perfect condition and probably had been washed ashore within a few days of the date of finding. The skin, which was preserved, constitutes the first Maryland specimen. On the same day, two other adult Kittiwakes were found near Rehobeth, Delaware, and on the previous weekend, we had found two adults at Seaside Heights, New Jersey. No oil marks were found on any of the birds, so it is possible that a storm at sea accounted for their death.

David A. Cutler

BOB-WHITE SEEK SHELTER IN WOODCHUCK HOLE

While I was box-trapping rabbits during the past winter I frequently saw a covey of nine Bob-white (*Colinus virginianus*) feeding along a fence row near Frederick, Maryland. At various times I marveled over the great speed with which the entire covey disappeared from sight as I approached. They ran into a clump of grass and then suddenly seemed to vanish into thin air. Upon closer observance of the clump on January 7, 1951, I found that concealed within it was a woodchuck hole. Assuming that this was where my covey had gone, I sat down nearby and waited about ten minutes. Presently, out ran the nine quail from the mouth of the hole. This came as quite a surprise to me as I have hunted quite a bit and never seen anything such as this. When I inquired around town, many sportsmen said they had seen similar incidents.

Rodgers Tull Smith

APRIL 15: MEXICO FARMS. Ten adult members of the Allegany Bird Club met at two o'clock for a walk along the old C. & O. canal. Miss Nan Livingstone was the leader. A brisk wind may account for the fact that we saw only thirteen species of birds. They included an American Bittern and a Black and White Warbler.

Adele E. Malcolm.

APRIL 21: LINGANORE AND REICH'S FORD. Fourteen members of the Frederick Branch, under the leadership of Rod Smith and Miss Sarah Quinn, observed 30 species including Green Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron, Spotted Sandpiper, House Wren, Osprey and Ruby-crowned Kinglet.